

REMARKS

Claims 1-14 have been examined. With this amendment, Applicant cancels claim 2 and adds claims 15-18. Claims 1 and 3-18 are all the claims pending in the application.

I. Formalities

Applicant thanks the Examiner for acknowledging the claim for foreign priority and for confirming receipt of the certified copy of the priority document.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for indicating that the Formal Drawings filed on September 17, 2003, have been accepted.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for initialing and returning a copy of the form PTO-1449 submitted with the Information Disclosure Statement filed on February 27, 2004.

II. Modification to the Specification and Claims 7-9

Applicant has modified claims 7-9 to more precisely define the invention. Applicant has also made changes to the specification to more clearly describe the invention. Applicant submits that no new matter has been added.

III. Claim Objections

The Examiner has objected to claims 10, 11 and 14 because of minor informalities. Applicant submits that the modifications to the claims obviate the objection.

IV. Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 2, 7-9, 12 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Teruo *et al.* (JP 10-2306080) ["Teruo"] in view of Minemoto *et al.* (US

6,172,693 B1) [“Minemoto”]. For at least the following reasons, Applicant traverses the rejection.

Claim 1 recites an ink-jet recording unit “wherein [the] shaking means is provided so that an ink shaking direction conforms to an ink ejecting direction.” The Examiner concedes that Teruo does not disclose this feature, but applies Minemoto to allegedly cure the deficiency. The Examiner references col. 3, lines 57-61 of Minemoto as allegedly disclosing this feature.

The cited section of Minemoto only discloses that voltage is applied to stirring electrodes 105 and 106. Minemoto’s disclosure does not disclose the “shaking direction” of the ink. However, based on the configuration of the stirring electrodes 105 and 106 (Fig. 3), Applicant submits that it is apparent that any movement of the ink, when stirred, will be in a direction that is perpendicular to the direction of the ink injecting direction.

There is no disclosure or suggestion in Minemoto that the ink stirring direction would conform to the ink ejecting direction. In fact, all the embodiments of Minemoto require that the stirring electrodes be off when their respective ejecting electrode is pulsed (see Figs. 4, 6 and 8), which would imply that the ink stirring direction would not conform to the ink ejecting direction.

Accordingly, Applicant submits that Teruo in view of Minemoto does not disclose or suggest that the ink shaking direction conforms to an ink ejecting direction as set forth in claim 1.

Applicant submits that claims 7-9 are patentable at least by virtue of their dependency on claim 1.

Because the ink-jet recording method of claim 12 recites a feature similar to that given above with respect to claim 1, Applicant submits that claim 12 is patentable for at least reasons similar to those given above with respect to claim 1.

Claim 13 recites an ink-jet recording method that comprises "shaking the colorant particles agglomerated at the tip of each of said ink guides while the voltage is applied to said ejecting electrode." The Examiner concedes that Teruo does not disclose shaking the ink but applies Minemoto to allegedly cure the deficiency. Because all the embodiments of Minemoto require that the stirring electrodes be off when their respective ejecting electrode is pulsed (see Figs. 4, 6 and 8), Applicant submits that at least this feature is not disclosed or suggested by Teruo in view of Minemoto.

V. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant thanks the Examiner for finding allowable subject matter in claims 3-6, 10 and 11 and for indicating that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicant also thanks the Examiner for indicating that claim 14 would be allowable if the claim objection is resolved.

Applicant has rewritten claim 10 in independent form and has amended claim 14 as suggested by the Examiner. Applicant holds rewriting claims 3-6 in abeyance until the subject matter of claim 1 is resolved.

VI. New Claims

With this amendment Applicant adds claims 15-18. Applicant submits that claims 15-17 are patentable at least by virtue of their dependency, as well as the features set forth therein.

Applicants submit that claim 18 is patentable at least by virtue of the recitation "wherein the shaking mean is a self-vibrating body."

VII. Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

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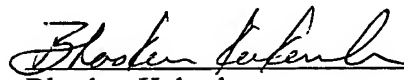
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